

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 04241

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN FROM AMBASSADOR

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJ: DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES VIEWS ON ITALIAN POLITICAL SITUATION

1. WHILE THE PRESIDENT'S AND THE SECRETARY'S VIEWS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT HAVE COME THROUGH LOUD AND CLEAR AND ARE WELL UNDERSTOOD BY EVERYBODY HERE, THERE PERSIST RUMORS AND SPECULATION THAT OUR POLICY WILL CHANGE IF A DEMOCRAT IS ELECTED. THIS SORT OF SPECULATION IS UNFORTUNATELY GIVEN A LOT OF WEIGHT BECAUSE IT IS REPEATED ENDLESSLY BY PEOPLE WHO CLAIM TO KNOW AND STANDS UNDENIED. IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HIT THIS HEAD ON, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE UPCOMING DC CONGRESS AT THE END OF THIS WEEK AND IN VIEW OF THE POSSIBILITY OF PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN JUNE.

2. I WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST THAT THE DEPARTMENT ATTEMPT TO ARRANGE FOR PUBLISHABLE STATEMENTS BY THE LEADING CANDIDATES. (YOU WILL RECALL THAT WE DISCUSSED THIS POSSIBILITY IN YOUR OFFICE LAST NOVEMBER.) I WOULD THINK THAT HUMPHREY WOULD BE THE MINIMUM, BUT CARTER & JACKSON WHO MADE A STATEMENT AND PERHAPS UDALL WOULD BE GOOD TOO. IT WOULD ALSO PROBABLY BE MOST EFFECTIVE TO GET THE STORY WRITTEN BY AN ITALIAN CORRESPONDENT RESIDENT IN THE U.S. LOOKING AT BOTH THE TALENTS AND STYLE OF THE REPORTERS AND THE IMPACT THEIR PAPERS HAVE ON THE ITALIAN SCENE, I THINK THAT SUCH A STORY WOULD BE MOST EFFECTIVE IF
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DONE BY UGO STILLE FOR PUBLICATION IN CORRIERE DELLA SERA.

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